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The Monument:

A SMALL SELECTION FROM THE

SERMONS

OF THE LATE

RIGHT REV. JAMES KEMP, D. D.

RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S PARISH, BALTIMORE,—AND BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF MARYLAND.

TOGETHER WITH THE

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE TIME OF HIS INTERMENT,

By W. E. WYATT, D. D

Then Associate Minister in the same Parish.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

OF THE BISHOP.

BALTIMORE:

J. ROBINSON, NO. 2 NORTH CALVERT STREET.

1833.

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PREFACE.

SEVERAL considerations have combined to recommend the publication of the present volume. It is desirable to preserve a MEMORIAL of all who, in this country, have held a relation to the Church so interesting and important as that of its Bishops. Their alliance is no doubt peculiarly endearing to the diocess over which they are chosen to preside; and the power of their doctrine and example is most felt in those parishes among which they have gone, with the authority of a ruler, the vigilance of a shepherd, and the tenderness of a parent. Yet do their character and influence belong to the whole ecclesiastical body of which they were legislators; and it is both gratifying

and profitable to find them with one accord maintaining "the faith once delivered to the Saints," and breathing the Spirit of that "form of sound words," to which successive ages only add increasing veneration.

The present volume however, is to be regarded *princially* AS A MEANS OF AFFORDING TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE DIOCESS OF MARYLAND THE PRIVILEGE OF CO-OPERATING IN THE ERECTION OF A MONUMENT TO THEIR DECEASED AND MUCH VENERATED BISHOP. To all he has ministered in the discharge of his office as Chief Shepherd of the flock; and to very many, prior to his election to this charge, was he the instrument of imparting the most precious truths and consolations. It is believed that it will be a source of lively gratification to such persons, that they may preserve in their own homes and hearts, a MEMORIAL of his affectionate, and judicious, and evangelical in-

structions, while they perpetuate his name, and manifest their grateful sense of his worth, by contributing to rear a monumental pile upon his grave.

That these objects may be effected without collision with each other, the editor has deemed it best to select *portions* of a considerable number of sermons, instead of exhibiting, as was originally proposed, the entire of a very few. The justice of some observations contained in a letter which accompanied the manuscripts, when they were placed in his hands by the family, has induced him to annex them to this preface; and he is persuaded that nothing more need be added to disarm criticism, and to engage the favorable regard of the Church.

"The object which is to be accomplished by this publication meets my entire approba-

tion; but justice to the memory of my father, his standing in the Church, and my solicitude for his reputation, all forbid that I should consent to the publication of any thing as his, which is to have merely a secondary consideration. My father's sermons, being principally of a practical character, and composed in the short intervals snatched from numerous and pressing engagements, possess little of the polish and finish which suit the prevailing taste. I have known him to write a sermon in less time than some men would have required for the arrangement of their subject. And so little importance did he attach to the garb in which his sermons appeared, that he seldom took the trouble to alter a single phrase; so that you may sometimes find the same turn of expression occurring frequently in successive paragraphs. The idea should not be conveyed that these sermons were specimens of his ability or learning. The truth is, no

man ever avoided more studiously the affectation of learning than my father. Indeed this aversion to an ostentatious display of parts, and fondness for simplicity, led him to the other extreme; although, I will venture to assert, there were few, if any in the Church, who were better scholars, or more profoundly conversant with all the various branches of Divinity."

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMORANDA.

JAMES KEMP, youngest son of Donald and Isabel Kemp, in the parish of Keith Hall, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, was born in the year 1764.

At an early age he was sent to the grammar school of Aberdeen, where his assiduity and good conduct not only procured for him the approbation of his preceptors, but the highest honors of the institution. In 1782, having obtained by competition the second bursary in the grammar school, he was immediately transferred to the first class (corresponding with the freshman class of our college) of Marischal College, then under professor Steuart. He continued to pursue

his studies with the utmost diligence, and was distinguished through all the steps of his collegiate education. At this time Marischal College could boast of some of the ablest men of the age, and Mr. Kemp had the advantage of the instruction of professors Skein, Copland, Hamilton, Beatie and Campbell. In his senior year he was the successful candidate for a mathematical bursary, which was contended for by several distinguished scholars, among whom was the celebrated James Hay Beatie. He took his degree in 1786.—Anxious, however, to avail himself of all the advantages of the institution, he still continued his studies, attending the celebrated Dr. Campbell's lectures on divinity, and applying himself to the acquisition of the various branches of ornamental learning, not usually embraced in a collegiate course. After remaining a year beyond the usual term, he was solicited by a particular friend to turn his attention to mercantile

pursuits, and application was made in his behalf to a very distinguished mercantile house in London. But not being able to conquer his repugnance to this mode of life, and being desirous of visiting America, he embarked for the United States in April, 1787. Here he was soon employed as private tutor in Dorchester county, Eastern Shore of Maryland, and during the two years passed in this situation, continued to prosecute his theological studies. Having abandoned the Presbyterian communion in which he was educated, and under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Bowie, Rector of Great Choptank parish, prepared for the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church; he was admitted to Deacon's orders on the 26th, and to Priest's orders on the 27th December, 1789, and succeeded Dr. Bowie in the charge of the parish, in August the ensuing year. In 1813 he succeeded the Rev. Dr. Bend as associate Rector with the Rev Dr. Beasly, of

St. Paul's Parish, Baltimore, having previously received the degree of Doctor in Divinity, from Columbia College, in New York.

Being elected by the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Maryland, in 1814, to act as Suffragan Bishop, during the life of the Right Rev. Dr. Claggett, and to succeed him in case of survivorship, he was consecrated to the Episcopal office at New Brunswick, N. J., September 1st, of the same year, by the venerable presiding Bishop of the Church, Dr. White; Bishops Hobart and R. C. Moore being present and assisting. The jurisdiction of the Church of the Eastern Shore was committed to him as his peculiar province until 1816; when, upon the death of Bishop Claggett, he succeeded him as diocesan, and continued to discharge the duties of the office until his sudden, and most lamented death, on the 28th October, 1827. This melancholy event was occasion-

ed by the overthrow of a stage in which he was returning from Philadelphia, whither he had gone to participate in the consecration of the Right Rev. Dr. H. U. Onderdonk. The external injuries which he received were not very considerable, but his sufferings, from the first moment of the accident, were exceedingly great, and continued until the morning of the third day. He expired about noon, of Sunday, 28th October, 1827, possessing to his last breath, the full exercise of his intellectual powers, and in the calm, but most triumphant enjoyment of the privileges of Faith.

Mrs. Elizabeth Kemp, wife of the Bishop, a lady of great excellencies of character, had died on the 14th August of the preceding year; and she left but two children, a son and daughter; the latter of whom, Mrs. Sarah Harwood, also expired on the 5th February, 1833. It would be difficult in the

small space which could here be allotted to a notice of Mrs. Harwood, to do justice to the union in her of qualities which shone with a mild, but beautiful lustre, and which rendered her life precious to her friends, and her death unspeakably blessed. The characteristic which was most striking, was the combination of singular feminine gentleness and meekness, with energy and fidelity in social duties, and the utmost degree of firmness and decision in religious matters. The chamber of death, in which she had lingered for a long period, afforded an exhibition of Christian heroism equally instructive and consoling,—fruits corresponding with her privileges, and worthy of the principles she had imbibed, and the examples she had witnessed, under her father's roof.

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, BY THE ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF THE PARISH, AT THE TIME OF THE INTERMENT OF BISHOP KEMP:—

—[The coffin being deposited upon a bier, in the middle aisle of the Church, large portions of which were enveloped in mourning, and the clergy generally of the different denominations, with a vast concourse of citizens being present.]

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN:

WERE not this appalling spectacle now before me, and were we assembled here with only such emotions of awe and reverence as should always belong to those who tread the courts of the Lord, I might speak to you, if the occasion called for it, of the mutability of earthly things, of the fleeting vision of earthly greatness, of piercing the veil of the most holy place where God

sits in his eternal majesty, and of the immediate condition of souls summoned by death from our social circle, and from our bosoms; and there might, to many at least, be imparted a calm and pleasurable train of reflections. For enfeeble it as we may by the tumultous and exhausting passions which the world generates or fosters; bury it as we may beneath the cares and schemes, and indulgencies which belong altogether to this dying body; there is a never dying principle within us, whose aim is immortality, which loves it, pants for it, of which immortality, is the measure and scope. And there are none—when you hide from them the terms, the qualifications of a celestial inheritance, and the only alternative of such a destiny—there are none who would not triumph in the conviction, that, when all here shall have passed away, there is "a continuing city" prepared for them with the angels of God.

But these are truths about which we may reason deeply in our religious moods, or speculate ingeniously in our moments of leisure, but all of which demand some degree of calmness and self-possession: and what can I bring to this house but a bewildered mind, and a bruised heart, and a body borne down by hours of harassing excitement and consternation. A week is just completing its brief and rapid flight, since he, who now lies shrouded in that coffin before you, in fullness of health, in vigour of intellect, in soundness of constitution, sat with me, speaking of the things which belonged to this section of the kingdom of God. The interests and prospects of the Church at large, of this diocess, of our own parish in particular, engaged his affectionate and deep solicitude. Having left the city on the same evening, and being associated with his venerable Episcopal brethren, he accomplished the important object of his journey, and with aposto-

lic rites, transmitted to a most worthy and able divine, the mystic power of their sacred office. No sense of infirmity, no boding pain, or apprehension, warned him that the messenger was winging his flight from the throne of Jehovah to summon him to the awful presence. And with his accustomed cheerfulness and benignity, he was prosecuting his journey to his happy and virtuous home, when mysterious Providence gave the blow which eventually opened to him the doors,—as we devoutly and confidently trust,—of his home eternal in the heavens. And now all that remains to us, is the ruin of that goodly frame in which he went about among you doing good. How dark and inscrutable the ways of God! In the contemplation of them, —under the sense of their resistless, and sometimes desolating agency, the understanding and the principles seem to be paralysed. And at this moment, I acknowledge, I could not discuss coherently and advanta-

geously, any topic however interesting or important it might be. Jesus, who wept at the grave of Lazarus, will forgive the infirmity which makes the pulpit this day, scarcely the organ of instruction and consolation. And you, kind and sympathising friends; you bereaved flock; you, afflicted brethren, who under his paternal guidance and counsel, administered to the souls of his Episcopal charge the bread of life; you will forgive the aberrations and weaknesses of one who mourns over the bier of a colleague, equally a father and a friend. Every thing that I behold cherishes instead of suppressing this sadness. The temple itself, which was reared under his ministry, this shrouded desk from which his voice first pronounced the everlasting gospel, yonder darkened altar, upon which his hands will never again consecrate and break to you, the emblems of the bread which cometh down from heaven,—all—all speak to me of the extent of the loss

we have sustained. But there is a silence, also, which weighs upon the heart, in a manner infinitely more touching and oppressive. Why do we hear without its accustomed accompaniment, the mournful melody of the organ? Because the voices which at his bidding were wont to raise to heaven their joyful and adoring anthems, since his voice was hushed in that coffin, have trembled into sighs and sobs; and on this day of solemn rites have become mute also.

A brief passage of the word of God, however, presents itself to my mind, as not only applicable to our present circumstances, but as deriving a special claim to your attention from another fact. It is known that previous to his settlement in this parish, our lamented pastor, had the charge of a remote and comparatively obscure flock. When called by the providence of God, which had marked him out for a high, though fearfully

responsible destiny, to contend among you with the follies and vices which so often distinguish a populous city, he felt deeply and painfully the perilous task; and in his first discourse addressed to you as your minister, he could find no passage in the sacred volume more justly adapted to his feelings, and the interesting occasion, than the words which St. Paul reiterated again and again, in his Epistles to the Churches;—"Brethren pray for us." "Brethren, pray for us." This was characteristic of the simplicity and unassuming piety of his mind. His individual claim to your compliance with this precept has now ceased, in the fulness of that fruition which is the inheritance of redeemed souls. Prayer is no longer his task. Prayer can no longer procure for him augmented graces, or surer protection. But with the strictest justice, may this congregation and this diocess address to their brethren in the christian community, the same

words. With a force of appeal which must I trust, find an instant response in every heart, may the feeble individual, remaining in the pastoral charge, repeat the same entreaty: and speaking to the hearts of those who love the name of Christ; who love the souls purchased with his blood; who believe in promises made to the prayer of faith; who feel that we are members of one great body, of which Jesus is the head, and which must suffer or rejoice together;—with a force resistless in the christian bosom, may he say to you, dear brethren, pray for us!

Forgive this momentary indulgence of selfishness, extorted equally by a sense of dependence upon grace in every step of the ministry, and by a painful apprehension of the value of souls; and allow me to show you in few words, the grounds of our claim as a congregation to your compliance with this apostolic entreaty.

We have sustained, in the death of our venerable and Right Rev. Father, an alarming, a desolating bereavement. Called to preside over the diocess at a period of strong and lamentable excitement, he was sometimes misapprehended and misjudged. Those who had not before enjoyed an opportunity of closely observing his character, could not at once do justice to the many and great excellencies by which he was distinguished. From that moment, however, as he mingled more indiscriminately with his brethren of the Clergy and Laity, prejudices began to be supplanted by an affectionate acknowledgment of his worth; apprehension gave place to a generous confidence in the scriptural soundness of his principles, and the kindness of his heart; and he had yielded to him in the diocess an honourable degree of influence and affection. His manner afforded in a singular degree an indication of the character of his mind. An unaffected sim-

plicity, an uniform gentleness and cheerfulfulness, were combined with a firmness and decision when circumstances called for their exercise, which sometimes astonished those by whom he had only been seen in his ordinary duties. In college he had been distinguished by his proficiency in mathematics; and his intellect always retained a corresponding degree of vigour. His attainments were extensive; and his discourses, to which in addressing you I need only allude, were full of valuable maxims, and rich in allusions to gospel truths, perspicuously expressed, but arranged without much art. In him nothing appeared to be done for effect. In the pulpit, in the chancel, and in social intercourse, there was in him an obvious identity of character. And this uniform, unpretending singleness of purpose, and fidelity in duty, won the public confidence, and caused his virtues to be extensively acknowledged, and highly appreciated among all classes of the

community. He is taken from his parish and diocess at a moment when,—I would not dare to utter a repining or rebellious sentiment, but must I not say,—when his life had become peculiarly important and precious? May I not then appeal, with unhesitating confidence to the christian sympathy that moves you, urging the Apostle's exhortation, —"Brethren, pray for us."

Our duties in relation to this event, and arising out of it, should be regarded with the deepest sensibility, and invoke for us christian sympathy, and christian intercession at the throne of grace. God has ordained a sudden and final suspension of means which have been employed during sixteen years, for our sanctification and salvation. The word of God is powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, disclosing even the thoughts and intents of the heart. It has proved so in his mouth, ac-

cording to the avowed experience of many whom I address. But when He "who spake as never man spake," was upon the earth, it is recorded that in many places, "*he* could do no mighty work because of their unbelief." Of the seed which the husbandman, in the parable, is represented to have sown, three parts in four failed to produce any fruits, through the defects of the soil upon which it fell. When the Israelites hardened their hearts against the admonitions of his prophets, God removed their teachers from them in his terrible displeasure. Brethren, for each paternal admonition which you have heard from your deceased pastor, for every prayer which in his closet, or in the sanctuary, he uttered in your behalf, for every ordinance which he hallowed and ministered, and which, with faith and devotion you should have received at his hands,—for all these "God will bring you into judgment." And every degree of

conformity to the spirit of his Gospel which you should have attained, and, in the faithful discharge of your duty, *might* have attained, will be required—strictly required of you, when the Lord shall call his servants to account for the talents committed to them. Deep and close self-examination, renewed and more holy resolutions, and earnest entreaty for divine forgiveness of your neglect or abuse of past religious privileges, become now your duty; and that you may be enabled to fulfil all this, you should mutually invoke each other's intercession with heaven.

There are considerations connected with the circumstances of the removal of this eminent servant of God, which invite the sympathy and prayers of Christian brethren. It is so instinctive in the heart to shrink from violent casualties; to look with comparative pleasure upon the triumph of faith

in the chamber to which death makes his slow and obvious approach; and to sigh even over the illustrious history of the Martyr's ascent in a chariot of fire; that we are in danger of presuming to wish that the summons to eternity, had approached our Father in a milder form. That he should for a moment seem to have been the victim of the mad riot of the unprincipled and the worthless; that he, whose life in its whole calm career, was an exhibition of the most rigid and honourable prudence and abstemiousness, should have fallen a martyr to the rashness of those to whom he had entrusted his sacred person, it shocks—it lacerates the heart; and we feel, as when we read of the sacriligious entrance of the Roman soldiery into the holy place of the temple, which they defiled with their presence, ere it was consumed. When we gaze at that form, in its ruin, beneath a shroud which kindly hides the blow of death, a presump-

tuous and unbelieving spirit of repining would exclaim, "the abomination of desolation has stood where it ought not." But the Gospel suggests truths of a happier tone. God in his sovereignty is sometimes mysterious, but is always wise and merciful also. The passage to glory of the Bishop of our flock, was short though thorny. It was found when in the discharge of a high and sacred duty.—It was cheered in every stage by the kindness of friends, and sustained and soothed by the hand of skill, and the voice of tenderness. And the venerable head which is so soon to sleep on a pillow of earth, first reposed on the bosom of filial love and duty. We cannot however, fail to regard with painful apprehension, the extension of habits, which, in their desolating path, involve alike the virtuous and the guilty, the honoured and the obscure, in sorrow and suffering. Let legislators avert the reproach of shrinking, through any selfish con-

sideration, from the obvious and easy means of guarding the public morals, and the public welfare. And let us with one consent, lift a voice of warning and entreaty, when persons of all classes and pursuits, are seen "passing their children, with themselves, through these fires to Molock." Let us pray God, that intemperance may no longer be the guilt and curse of the land.

Brethren, I have one more plea to urge in behalf of your charitable intercession for us at the throne of grace. It is that an exhibition of the power of grace, so devout, so touching, so noble, as was afforded in the last moments,—during the whole illness, I should say—of our deceased Bishop, may not lose its proper effect upon the hearts of all of us. It has been my office to stand at many a bed side, where death was doing his strange work. Many an humble and contrite spirit have I been called to sustain by the words

of truth, in its approach to the awful realities and mysteries of eternity. But never have I seen a calmer and firmer assurance, a more humble and entire submission to the will of God, trust in his promises, or sense of the value of the Redeemer's blood, than in Bishop Kemp in his "hour of fear." There was no repining, no impatience under pain, at any moment. There was cheerfulness and comfort in the manner in which he spoke of the duty in which he had been engaged. On the last morning, he at one time arrested the attention of his friends to listen to some sentiments which he then felt able to utter; and he immediately proceeded to avow his faith in the efficacy of the Saviour's covenant; his sense of a need of his atoning merits; his charity—his charity for all, his forgiveness of all; his trust, submission, and hope. He then commended particularly all the objects of his affection and solicitude, to the mercy and care of the

Almighty; and this with an unfaltering voice, until he uttered the words, "I pray for my diocess," when some emotion caused his accents to tremble. He heard with manifest pleasure of the sensibility you had discovered, my brethren, when a few moments before, your prayers had been asked in this temple that his life might be spared; and he repeated several times "kind, good people, good people." A few moments before his last breath escaped him, when your speaker was endeavouring to persuade himself and the sufferer, that the inevitable hour was not so nigh at hand, as had been supposed, he replied "I cannot be deceived; two more such pains as I experienced just now, would extinguish life." And when the same individual was expressing to him the bitterness of his grief at the threatening calamity, the Bishop said, "it is to me a truly happy moment, and I shall, I trust be accepted of God, my Saviour and Sanctifier."

His consciousness and his breathing appeared to leave him almost at the same moment: and the spirit parted, without agony, to partake—must I not say, in the view of the sure covenant of Jehovah,—to partake of eternal and unmingled felicity.

Now we read in the book of God, of the efficacy of faith in sustaining holy men of old in persecutions and death; and the history of every subsequent age, is rich in incidents inculcating the same truth. Similar scenes are passing in many a cottage, where the rejoicing angels of God, in their unseen but sacred glory, are almost the only witnesses, of the triumph of grace over nature; and we either hear little of them, or they affect us like the story of a fictitious or distant event. This has taken place within our own precincts, in the person of a friend well known to you, and whose corresponding life justified the expectation of such a re-

sult. The trial too, was calculated to disturb, if aught could have shaken, the firmness of his principles. Life, though not without its portion of vicissitudes, had become to him a tranquil and happy period. His home was pure and holy in its pleasures, and he was important there.—God comfort them now in the desolation of their hearts! But with apparently fair ground before him for calculating upon a slow and calm decline into the bosom of the grave, he is hastily torn from all this usefulness and enjoyment; and, almost in a moment, beholds arrayed before him the withering terrors of death and judgment. And yet his principles failed him not. He was peaceful in believing, where so many have trembled and mourned. He triumphed, where so many have despaired. Brethren, pray for us, that we may have grace to cultivate the same principles, and that they may lead to the same blessed result. You who highly esteem the neces-

sity and value of the Gospel, behold here what it can accomplish. You, who are unfaithful in your discharge of its duties, contemplate here something of the loss you are about to inflict upon yourselves. An external religion, a sense of the importance to society of some restraint upon passion, and some guard to morals, may do much for such ends: it may refine, and harmonise, and dignify the intercourse of society: it may protect you from many calamities: it may ward off many an arrow from your consciences. But nothing but an experience of the renewing, revolutionizing power of Christ's spirit, and Christ's doctrines, can render your approach to eternity safe, or the ages which shall roll over your destiny there, blissful and glorious. You must live with Christ, if you would find that to die is gain. And learn here how nigh, even at the doors, that consummation may be. They were not the threescore and five years which have passed

over that venerable head, which now lay it low, and constrain us to bear him from before his own altar, where is the bread of life, from his own temple where is the light of of life, and to consign him to the dark and mouldering cloisters of a tomb. It is the mysterious but resistless decree of Almighty God alone; and that decree may be preparing for either of us speedily, a similar destiny. Oh then, here, in the presence of all that remains of him, who for so many years watched over you, prayed for you, wept in your griefs, rejoiced in your prosperity, and strove to win and lead you up to God,—in his presence, and under the all-searching eye of Jehovah himself,—here vow and bind yourselves to the obedience of the Gospel. And before his honoured bier, let each of us say; Father, if we have ever resisted thee in thy paternal efforts for us, we are contrite: if we have slighted thee, we are sad: if we have failed to meet thy wishes,

and improve thy admonitions, we ask forgiveness of him, with whom we trust thou now art, in the contemplation of thy eternal glory and joy.

SERMONS, &c.

A SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE CONSECRATION OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, BALTIMORE, MARCH 11, 1817.

Gen. XXVIII, 16, 17.—And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid and said, how dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

We are assembled on this occasion, to separate this house from secular purposes, to dedicate it to the service of God, and to render it holy. Henceforth it is to be exclusively devoted to the worship of the Almighty, to the administration of the ordinances and sacraments of the church of

Christ, and to the communication of religious instruction and consolations.

This practice of consecrating churches, is not founded in superstition. We do not pretend, that by this act, any holiness is conferred upon the materials, or the place. All that is meant by consecration, when applied to material and irrational things, is, that they are henceforth to be used for the purposes of religion alone. And the very structure of the human mind, the sentiments uttered by our Lord himself, and the practice of both Jews and Christians, acknowledge and sanction this ordinance.

Such is the nature of the mind of man, that external objects or places excite thoughts and reflections in correspondence with their own character. When we approach magnificent objects—when we contemplate sublime and awful scenes, our minds are fill-

ed with astonishment and admiration. When we enter a house, in which we have heard only voices of praise—in which, we have engaged in no exercises but those of devotion, in which we have listened to no instructions, but those of a grave and religious nature; veneration and awe immediately take possession of the mind. But were we, in the same place, alternately to engage in the turmoil of business, in the giddy frivolities of amusement, and in sacred acts of devotion,—were we in the same house, one day to listen to the discussion of a political question, and the next day to hear the deep and important doctrines of religion enforced, our minds would be disturbed by conflicting emotions; discordant ideas and discordant feelings would harass and disturb them.

Besides, the divine Head of the christian church has expressly promised, that where

two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them. Revelation seems sometimes to raise the curtain between us and the world of spirits, and admit us to a partial view of their condition. And although we have no faculties adequate fully to comprehend the proceedings of spiritual beings, yet they are sometimes nearly brought to our view. We can therefore conceive, that he who fills all space, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, may be still more immediately present in houses devoted to his service. Whenever society has been in a settled state, temples have been built and dedicated to the worship of God. In the infancy of the world, during the pastoral ages, when men were moving from one pasturing district to another, and from country to country, they had no fixed places for divine worship. It is true they erected altars for sacrifice, and they sometimes planted groves.

But possessing no fixed religion, their communications with the Almighty were not stated, nor their worship regular. Sometimes touched by the grandeur and solemnity of the evening sky—sometimes in a solitary grove, they uttered the devout effusions of their souls, and they were warmed and invigorated by divine influences. But as soon as the Hebrews received a religion from heaven, and the church of God assumed an organised form, they were commanded to make and dedicate to the service of God, a splendid tabernacle. The finest and richest materials were collected, the utmost ingenuity of art was displayed, the most profuse offerings of the people were given, to defray the charge of this tabernacle. A priesthood was appointed by God, and all the vessels and materials necessary in performing the ceremonies of their worship were provided. A whole tribe was allotted for the service of the tabernacle; and all these were duly con-

secrated and set apart for divine service. No unhallowed foot was to enter this tabernacle; no unhallowed hand was to touch it. "It was a holy thing," set apart for the worship of "the present Jehovah."

After the Jews were quietly settled in the land of Canaan, and at peace with all the nations around them, Solomon built and dedicated to the Lord, a costly, superb temple. Synagogues too were erected through the land of Judea, after the captivity, in which divine worship was performed, and the law read, every Sabbath day.

In the infancy of Christianity, when the converts were surrounded by idolaters, and sometimes severely and cruelly persecuted, they were obliged to perform their devotions, and inculcate their doctrines in private houses, or in places still more carefully concealed from unrelenting enemies. But as

soon as the cross of Christ became triumphant, and believers were multiplied rapidly in the world, churches were built and consecrated to religious purposes.

This practice then is to be considered as resting upon divine authority, as corresponding with the nature of the human mind, and as calculated to inspire and improve religious affections and principles.

To those, under whose care this noble edifice has been erected, it will be a delightful reflection, to think that they have, though with much care, and through many anxieties and troubles, given a temple to God; that they have fixed a repositary of pure religion,—from which rays of truth and divine influence will diverge over every part of this city.—Nay, in the realms of glory many an inhabitant may, we hope, be found, who will trace to this temple his first impressions of

religious duty; that here he was brought to Jesus in the ordinances of the gospel; and, that here the first illuminations of divine grace shone into his soul.

We rejoice to see a portion of your wealth so laudably bestowed. And believing, as we do, religion to be the only foundation of good morals, free government, harmony and order in society, undisturbed comfort, and eternal salvation; our hearts are elated with joy on this sacred occasion. And reflecting that the work is accomplished, and this house is now dedicated to God, the sentiments of the holy Patriarch, when he awoke, after an interview with the Supreme Being, must appear to all truly applicable,—"*how dreadful is this place!* this is none other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven."

Let us dwell for a few moments upon the points of correspondence. THIS IS THE HOUSE OF GOD. Here the Almighty is immediately present. No secular business is to be transacted here,—no worldly plans to be formed,—no unholy thoughts to be indulged; every thing in this house is to be begun, continued, and ended, in God. In this house, it is our object to escape from the world and all its corruptions; to this house we flee for spiritual consolation and strength; in this house we hold communion with the author of our being, the supporter of the universe, the arbiter of our destiny.

Agreeably to the directions of our church, as expressed in our excellent Liturgy, we meet in this house to confess our manifold sins and wickedness, and that too with an humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart; to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received; to hear God's most holy

word; and to ask those things that are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul.

Enjoying the unspeakable advantages of a revealed religion, we are by no means at a loss to know, what kind of service will be acceptable to the Almighty, how that service is to be performed, or what will be the effect. If we confess our sins with a truly penitent heart, we know, that through the Saviour's covenant, an humble and a contrite heart, the Lord will not despise. Nay, the matter, under the christian dispensation, is brought to the most clear and precise issue. The atonement of our Saviour is the established way by which we can obtain pardon, through faith and repentance. And no ground of difficulty or uneasiness remains, provided our faith be true and living, and our repentance sincere and practical.—These, it is true, are points of great interest.

And that on these points there be no fallacy or self-delusion is of infinite importance.

Praise is a part of divine worship, not only delightful in itself, but acceptable to God, in as much as it implies on our part, the most pure and elevated state of our best affections; and we are taught to believe, that this is the employment of Saints and of Angels.

Prayer, in the most comprehensive sense, and as it is established and regulated by the christian religion, also manifests a devout temper of mind; zeal for the glory of God, and the welfare of our fellow men; an anxiety to secure the assistance of the Holy Spirit; and an acquiescence in all the ways and appointments of divine providence. Thanksgiving is also a part of divine worship, which must originate in the same state of heart, and is equally acceptable to the Almighty.

These are the prominent exercises of divine service; and these, we are certified, are acceptable to God. "God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." This applies both to the manner and the nature of the worship: we worship God in spirit, when we worship him with a devout and reverential heart; we worship him in truth, when we offer unto him confessions, praise, prayer and thanksgiving, under the directions and limitations that he has been pleased to fix.

In his holy temple too, we hear the word of God. To read a portion of the Scripture, has wisely been made an inseparable part of our service: and what can be a more important and profitable part! While we are in a devout frame of mind, when the world is excluded and all the pious affections enlivened, to hear some of the most weighty communications from heaven, the instruc-

tions and consolations of a divine religion, cannot but exert an influence over the character and life.

Then is the service in our christian temple, so finely diversified, and so judiciously adapted to the spirit and design of the Gospel, that the mind is elevated by its grandeur, sustained and delighted by its variety, and filled with the love of divine wisdom by its instructions.

Nay, the very attitudes of body, observed during our service, are founded in the strictest propriety.—When we confess our sins and implore pardon and grace, we kneel to imply the humility and earnestness of our hearts; we stand when we utter praise, that being the most sublime privilege of rational man in divine worship; when we listen to the sacred volume, we sit, that being a position favorable to attention, and that we may

receive these instructions with care, and treasure them up with satisfaction.

To all these, the wisdom of our church has thought fit to add, religious addresses from the minister of Christ; and although this is the only part of our service, in which the peculiarities, the passions, and the weaknesses of man can mingle, still even in this, being engaged in the illustration and application of the word of God, we are by no means to guide our hearers with the wisdom of men, nor to entertain them with philosophical disquisitions; but to open and expound to them the counsels of God, to apply the plan of redemption, and to unfold to their view the glories of heaven and the torments of hell.

II. "THIS IS THE GATE OF HEAVEN." In this temple, all the ordinances and sacraments of the christian church are to be ad-

ministered. Into this church, members are to be initiated by the sacrament of baptism. This implies that they are translated from a state of nature into the family of God; that they are vested with a covenant right to all the privileges and benefits of the plan of grace; and that if these be duly improved and applied, they will ultimately be admitted into the church of the first born in heaven. All the benefits of the grand scheme of redemption are to be viewed as talents. And these talents are not only to be preserved; they are to be applied and improved. The christian privileges are divine means, the spiritual instruments, by which is to be effected such a radical renovation of our nature, as to prepare it for the presence of God.

Here too, when persons come to the years of discretion, they are Confirmed in their holy profession; their title to all the privi-

leges of the gospel is ratified; responsibility is transferred from their parents to themselves; and they become parties to the gospel covenant in their own persons.

In this temple, the sacrament of the Lord's supper is administered. This conveys to the sincere penitent a renewed assurance of pardon; spiritual nourishment to the hungry soul; and an outward and visible sign of communion with the divine head, Jesus Christ, through fellowship with his body, the church.

And moreover, the pious affections, the holy ardor, which the temple is calculated to excite, yield a foretaste of the joys of heaven. For here indeed, the wicked cease from troubling, and here the weary are at rest; the small and the great meet together; the yoke of the gospel becomes easy; the

power of the world is enfeebled; and heaven opened to our delighted contemplation.

From this time then, are you to view this as the house of prayer, in which you are devoutly to meet with God that you may worship him. From this time, are you to consider it as the gate of heaven, through which we humbly trust, that many a soul may pass to eternal rest and unfading glory. It now remains to suggest, that line of conduct, which these considerations demand of you.

An impression like that of the holy Patriarch, is to occupy your minds, whenever you approach this temple,—how dreadful is this place! And when you enter, you are to remember that "the Lord is in his holy temple." It is not enough, that levity is to be entirely banished; conversation prohibited; all discordant passions to be hushed;

but all worldly thoughts are to be expelled, and a religious awe to fill the whole soul.

While the holiness of the place imposes silence and awe, the exercises in which you engage, imply humility, penitence, and awakened attention. The very structure of our service requires, that if they would have a rational worship adapted to God, the congregation should join in the several parts. Lest, the mind wandering, the congregation should carelessly listen to the confession, as they would to a discourse, they are all required, audibly to follow the minister, uttering every expression from a heart deeply penitent,—making every intercession for pardon and grace, their own.

The spirit of a true christian is a spirit of habitual humility; his repentance is rather a habit, a state of mind, than an exercise. Still when he appears more immediately in

the presence of God, all the principles and affections of his heart are excited. Conscious of sin, feeling his situation in the temple of the Most High, called to repentance by a voice from heaven; can he refrain from sinking down before the Almighty to confess his sins, and to crave mercy and pardon? Hardened indeed must that heart be, which cannot be softened in the presence of its God.

In the house of God, every member of our communion is expected to unite in pronouncing publicly his faith, in the Apostle's creed. This form of faith, having been adopted in the church at a very early period, and containing the great and important doctrines of christianity, has been made a part of our stated service. And every member is expected solemnly to declare, in the presence of God, and of his holy church, that these are the articles of his faith. This we

deem one of the best protections of the purity and integrity of our communion. For, while this creed does not descend to minute and unimportant points, it contains all those articles of christian faith, which form the foundation of a christian life.

What sounds are more in correspondence with the objects of the temple of Jehovah, than the psalms and hymns, with which our service is finely interwoven! every tongue is expected gratefully to join in them, and every heart to expand with praise.

The lessons are God's message of mercy, delivered in the place where his honour dwelleth, to souls that come before him guilty and perishing. These lessons are so judiciously selected, that they contain the most interesting portions of that message, the most awful admonitions to a holy life. As they are without mixture of human opinion,

you have nothing to do but to treasure them up with care, and apply them with fidelity.

If, my brethren, with these sentiments, you approach this house; if in this manner you join in its holy service, it will prove to you in reality *the house of God, it will be the gate of heaven.* If on the Lord's day, when the bustle of wordly business is hushed, and a calm, emblematic of heaven, prevails, you advance to this house with reverence, and enter it with holy fear; if bold in the promises, and humble in penitence, you join in the service with ardor and elevation of soul, must you not secure the favor of God?—Must you not appropriate all the benefits of redemption, and draw down with a mighty efficacy the influence of the Holy Spirit? Thus disciplined, will you be enabled to suppress and conquer all the evil propensities of your nature; then will you be fortified against all the attacks of sin, and elevated above

the corruptions of the world; thus will you acquire and invigorate those dispositions and that temper of soul, that will make you meet for the occupations of heaven.

We cannot but hope, that even the most guilty will pause and reflect when they approach this house. We cannot but hope, that before they enter into the presence of the Searcher of hearts, they will lay aside all wicked imaginations, and suppress all unholy desires. Will those whose hearts are boiling with revenge, appear then in the presence of that Being, who has said, "vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord?" Will the impure sensualist, in all his loathsome debasement, come before a holy God, in whose sight the heavens are not clean? Will the profane swearer, come before Him who has declared, that he will not hold it a guiltless thing to take his name in vain, without trembling at his guilt, and

imploring pardon for his rash, presumptuous expressions and his unprofitable sin? Here our heavenly Father waits in infinite compassion, always ready to receive the returning prodigal, and to confer upon him every pledge of kindness; to restore him to his great household of faith, and bestow upon him all the privileges of a son.

While we inculcate such principles and conduct upon those who would worship in this holy temple, we must not forget, my reverend brethren, that here *we* have an important and responsible duty to perform. We stand here as accredited agents of heaven, as ambassadors of Christ, and as stewards of the mysteries of the grace of God. Our ministrations should correspond with the holy character of our office. When we lead the devotions of the people, our hearts should accord with our voices, in the most humble confessions, in the most elevated praises, in

the most devout prayers. Here the man, must, as far as possible, disappear, and the minister of Christ, the messenger of mercy, the advocate of souls, stand disclosed.—When we offer pardon and peace to the penitent, upon gospel terms, we must do it in the authority of our blessed Lord; when we intercede for divine grace, fervor of spirit should manifest itself in our manner, and kindle in the hearts of our people a corresponding earnestness; when we pronounce the commands of God, the congregation should remember the awful solemnity of Mount Sinai; and when we read the holy scriptures, it should be with all the gravity and reverence which their weight and importance demands.

In our sermons, we should aim at reaching the heart, to call forth its more noble affections, probe its wounds, and heal its maladies. We must pursue the sinner through

all his mazes of delusion and iniquity, and direct him to the fountain of peace and comfort. We must at one time, display the riches of divine grace; and at another, unfold the sternness of inflexible justice. We must animate the faithful, by displaying the joys of heaven; and rouse the obdurate, by proclaiming the terrors of perdition.—And all these things must come from hearts, radically convinced of their importance, and experimentally acquainted with their power.

Thus, my beloved brethren, shall we maintain the true character of our ministry, and be happily instrumental in bringing many to righteousness.

When we cast our eyes over the world, we perceive many indications of a great and glorious spread of the gospel. The age of infidelity has passed away. That jargon of sophistry and vanity, which assumed the dig-

nified name of philosophy, has, in a great measure, with its authors descended into the grave. The vast exertions making by Protestant christianity every where, to spread the light of the gospel over every region of the earth, and to send the bible into the abodes of idolatry, and into the cottages of the poor, and to offer the consolations of a divine religion, to every bruised, trembling, benighted soul; the societies established for the cheap multiplication of prayer books, and the publication of religious tracts; the improved character of books for children, showing a desire to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; all these things are subjects of the greatest joy and exultation.

While our souls praise and magnify the Lord for these things, let us zealously apply our advantages and blessings to the advance-

ment of these great objects, and to the salvation of our own souls.

If, after all the solicitude and expense that have been bestowed in erecting this house of prayer, it should be perverted to secular purposes; or if the services for which it was intended, should be neglected or abused; if the lips without the heart should be engaged in our sublime exercises of worship; if our ritual should ever be superseded by the crude and ill digested effusions of vanity and presumption; if the word of God and the instructions of divine wisdom, should be made to yield to the speculations of a vain philosophy; if sinners shall not be brought home, nor saints comforted; although our Lord is not here openly revealed to expel these abominations, yet I record it this day against such transgressors, that they will provoke his just censure and indignation.

But if being dedicated to God, it be regarded with veneration and awe; if the voice of every worshipper mingle, while our hearts join devoutly in the service; if we receive with thankfulness, his promises, and partake with joy of that spiritual food, which he has provided for his children; we may hope that we shall grow in grace. We may hope that the spiritual soil, well prepared for the reception of the word, will bring forth fruit, some thirty fold, some sixty, and some an hundred. In this temple, successive generations will be converted, multitudes enlightened with a knowledge of the truth, and striving christians strengthened and sanctified and saved. Thus will it prove, like the Bethel which was the scene of Jacob's privileges, "THE GATE OF HEAVEN."

THE FALL AND RESTORATION OF MAN.

I. Corinth. XV, 21, 22.—For since by man came death, by man came also, the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam, all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive.

As the fall of man is the melancholy event, in which originated every human calamity, so it laid the foundation of that amazing scheme of grace, which causes the admiration of angels. It is therefore highly necessary, to have a correct understanding of this matter, in order that we may duly appreciate the benefits of redemption, and with all the ardour of our hearts, apply them to our own salvation.

In the chapter from which my text is taken, the Apostle ascribes the death of all men to Adam, as he does the resurrection of the dead to Jesus Christ. And we must surely admit, that he who was so miraculous-

ly called, and who enjoyed, (perhaps, during his retirement in Arabia, in particular,) peculiar advantages in acquiring a full view, and complete knowledge of the whole plan of redemption, must be an enlightened and correct commentator on the history of this event.

Some, with a kind of scepticism, as presumptuous as weak, have alleged, that Moses' account of the fall was unintelligible,—that it must be a mere allegory to convey the idea of some calamity that happened to the race of mankind. But if we allow ourselves, thus to undermine the testimony of history of any kind, it is impossible to determine, the point on which we may confidently rely. It is our duty carefully to investigate, and candidly to receive the true obvious intention of holy writ; although in this life, "while we see but in part, and

know but in part," we are incapable of comprehending all the ways or works of God.

In the account of the creation, given by the inspired historian Moses, there are some strong particulars, that designate the nature and condition of man; and exhibit a marked distinction between him and irrational animals.

"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Thus it seems, that there are two constituent parts in man, his body composed of the elements of the earth, and his soul an emanation of Deity. And in correspondence with this account, Solomon in his description of old age and death, says "the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." This doctrine, was during a long se-

ries of years, obscured and perverted; and indeed one of the sects among the Jews denied it altogether. But our Lord dispersed all darkness and difficulty, and as the Apostle says, "brought life and immortality to light by the gospel."

The formation of woman, although an equal manifestation of divine power, differed in the mode. She was derived from man, with a view, it seems, to show the nature of the conjugal union. And that her body and soul were of the same nature with those of man, is to be inferred from the declaration of the Almighty, when he was about to form woman, "I will make him an help meet for him," or rather, "*like unto him.*" The principle of union in this state, was pure love, calculated to exclude the exercise of authority on the one hand, or subordination on the other.

With regard to the moral and intellectual faculties of man, although his being made, "in the image, after the likeness of the Almighty," must imply an elevated condition and great privileges, still, the exact limitations of that condition, we perhaps are unable to ascertain. In the opinion of David, he appears to have formed the connecting line between angelic and irrational beings. "Thou madest him lower than angels to crown him with glory and worship. Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: and thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of the field; the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas." Like all other intelligent beings, he was a free moral agent, and placed in a situation, where submission was the rule of his conduct. And, however unintelligible to us, the instance in which this obedience was

exacted, clearly shows that his condition was to be probationary. The circumstances under which the first pair were placed, narrowed the choice of a test of their faith and submission.

Of his innocence and happiness in their primeval state, the scriptures afford a high idea. Paradise, the term used by the Jews, to denote the place in which the abode of man was appointed, is used by our Saviour to designate the condition of the happy between death and the resurrection. "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—And St. Paul exhorts the Ephesians, to put on the new man, which "*after God* is created in righteousness and true holiness."

In the land of Eden, a country in the East, the Lord God planted a garden, in which man was placed. Every tree that was pleasant to the sight or good for food,

was planted in this garden. The tree of life was placed in the midst of it, and also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.—There was likewise, a river to water the garden. The only employment of man was, without toil or care, to dress and to keep it. While the tree of life, which probably possessed the quality of maintaining and invigorating the body of man, was planted in the midst of the garden, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was also planted there. And the condition of a continuance in this happy state, was, that man should never eat the fruit of this tree. Thus was the allegiance of man to his Creator tested.

Such was, originally, the happy condition of the first pair. And although from our present experience, we might suppose, that their bodies being composed of the elements of the earth, must have been subject to disease and dissolution, still it is difficult to say, to what

length of time, under certain circumstances, they might have existed. Exempted from the pressure of labour, and yet called to active recreation, neither wasted by the turbulent passions of the mind, nor deranged by the unruly appetites of the body,—neither overcharged by intemperance, nor pinched by want; enjoying a friendly sky, and a salubrious air; why, in the infancy of the world and of our race, might not the human body have continued vigorous and healthful for many hundred years? And indeed we are taught, that before the universal deluge, the life of man was extended to nearly a thousand years. Besides, it appears, that the tree of life was endued with a quality to render immortal the human body, perhaps gradually to change it, without death, into the state of those celestial bodies, with which, St. Paul says, souls will be clothed at the resurrection; for when the Lord expelled Adam and Eve from para-

dise, he placed a guard to keep the way of the tree of life, lest they should "take of it, and eat, and live for ever." That man was not subject to death in his primitive state, is clear, because death was the punishment of his transgression. Probably after a certain time, when his fitness for heaven was fully established, he might have been translated to a more immediate connexion and communion with his Creator.

As to the test of obedience, we can only say, that it was appointed by God, in the absence of many other trials, to which *we* are exposed, and from which *they* were necessarily exempt. Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day, thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

The temptation, it is said, was carried on by a serpent. But we learn from other parts of scripture, that the serpent was only an instrument made use of by Satan in this transaction. Our Saviour certainly alludes to this, when he says, "ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." And in the Revelations, we have these words, "and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

It has been said, that the serpent's conversing with Eve, must have been so extraordinary an occurrence, as to alarm her fears and her suspicion. But at so early a period after the creation, it is not improbable, that she had not become acquainted with the properties of different animals; may not

before have observed the serpent, nor have known that speech was peculiar to man. That the whole is a real transaction, is supported by a variety of passages of scripture; and it bears a character, in many points corresponding with the nature of those malignant spirits, which, though fallen from their original privileges, still hold a place in the universe of God.

Thence commenced a state of things, entirely new. Man disobeyed, and immediately fell from his happy condition. It is true, he did not forthwith expire; for although it is said, "in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," yet in the more explicit declaration of the sentence, it appears, that the body merely became mortal,—was only doomed to return to the ground: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Shame, the offspring of guilt, was immediately manifested; and although there was no eye to see them, but that eye from which nothing can be hid, still an effort was made to conceal, or cover themselves. Before transgression, they were, as infants, unconscious of shame: but after the perilous knowledge that they had acquired, they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

The next manifestation of a degraded condition, was their attempt to hide themselves from the presence of God. Before the fall, their highest glory and supreme delight, was derived from the presence and communion of God. And as man rises again from the effects of sin, and approaches the holiness of the heavenly paradise, so he delights in remembering and feeling the presence of God, which will constitute the perfection of his bliss in heaven. But

guilt shrinks from the eye of God; and it is said by David, that its most aggravated degree, its most hardened state, induces man to deny his existence. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."

In the proceedings of his retribution, first of all, the Lord pronounced a curse upon the serpent, which probably was a measure intended to exhibit a correspondence between all the matters connected with the fall. "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

He next proceeds to sentence the woman. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he

shall rule over thee." And unto Adam he said, "because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it, cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return."

This is a melancholy sentence indeed; it strongly marks the dreadful change that sin introduced into the world. Before the ground was cursed, and thorns and thistles were produced in sad luxuriance, it was man's welcome task to arrange and adorn his garden; to prune its wildness, and receive its rich and varied tribute. But now he has to con-

tend with useless shrubs and noxious weeds, to break its stubborn soil, and to earn his bread with toil and sorrow.

From this account, it appears, that by the fall, man was reduced from a state of innocence and immortality, to a state of sin and death. And this is fully confirmed by the whole tenour of scripture. For although in the text, the introduction of death, only is ascribed to Adam, yet in other places, the introduction of sin is also imputed to him.—"As by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And moreover, although, as must be expected in such a transaction, some circumstances perplexing or inexplicable by us, exist in the history of the fall, yet the state of things to which the world was then reduced, exactly corresponds with what we now find it. And this is a species of evidence in confirmation

of our doctrine which nothing can subvert. Woman continues to bring forth in sorrow, and to be subject to the stern authority of man. In the savage state, the government of the husband is austere, the condition of the wife wretched. In all countries, however fertile or barren, in all climates, however mild or severe, man earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. And after a life of toil and sorrow returns to the ground from which he sprung.

A short time indeed, had man left the garden of Eden, till the overbearing passions of a degraded nature, began to shew their influence, in acts of fraud, lust and murder. And before the flood, all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Having now ascertained the state to which man was reduced by the fall, we shall be enabled to form a just understanding of what

was effected by the atonement of Christ.—"For as in Adam, all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive." Jesus Christ, re-establishing the human race in a conditional title to immortality, engaged not—to prevent death, but to procure the resurrection of the dead. "All that are in their graves, shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

But to render immortal, a race of sinful and miserable beings, incapable of extricating themselves from their wretchedness, would have been no act of kindness. Our Saviour, then, through his atonement and covenant, placed them in a condition to escape the consequences of sin, and to be restored to communion and favor with God in the heavenly paradise. "God so loved the world,

that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

To rescue man entirely from the temporal effects of the fall, appears to have been no part of the plan of grace. The condition of woman remains the same, though it is true, where the gospel prevails, introducing the benevolence and refinement which are its proper fruits, the conjugal state approaches near to its original happy condition. Man has still to subdue and to till the stubborn ground, and by persevering labour to earn his bread. And many a pang and many a conflict, has he to endure from the turbulent and corrupt passions of his mind. Still in this warfare, he is cheered by the hope of being once again restored to the paradise of God.

It appears from plain passages of scripture, as well as from the deductions of reason, and the attributes of God, that the plan of redemption was formed before the foundation of the world. "God hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, *which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*" The operation of this plan, commenced immediately before the fall, and a dark intimation was given of it, before sentence was pronounced upon the guilty pair. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel." This was first applied to the serpent, whom the devil made use of; but in a more eminent and prophetic sense, it points out the subjection of the power of the devil by Christ, here designated as "the seed of the woman." And in correspondence with this,

the Apostle says, "and for as much as children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death, he might destroy him, that had the power of death, that is the devil."

We shall now advert to the practical instructions, that naturally flow from this doctrine. That what we have been now describing, is not a mere imaginary series of occurrences, but the real history and condition of man, is proved by a vast amount of testimony in the sacred volume, and confirmed by the experience of every human being. We all, my brethren, feel this life to be a scene of vexation and sorrow, of labour and pain. We see our race daily descending to the grave. We behold every thing fleeting and transitory; nor can we find a single object, on which we can permanently fix our hope. Neither can we alter our condition; for even if we be in a situation exempt-

ed from labour, we cannot escape perturbations of mind, and diseases of body, nor can any human skill, affluence, or power, avert death. Let us then, raise our views, and our hope, to that glorious Being, who died for sin, and overcame death. We have great reason to be thankful, that, although our first parents were excluded from the tree of life in the garden of Eden, we are admitted to that tree, whose boughs extend from the river to the ends of the earth, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. But we should never forget, that if we despise or neglect this, nothing belongs to us but "a fearful looking for of judgment." This is the only opportunity to secure the benefits of that redemption, by which we can be raised from our fallen condition, and prepared once more for the presence of God. With what astonishment therefore, do we see many as ignorant of a Redeemer, as unconcerned about redemption, and as inattentive

to the means by which its benefits are to be secured, as if they were already in possession of pure and permanent felicity! Some pursue riches as passionately as if they were permanent. Some grasp at pleasure, as if it afforded pure delight. Some yield to the dictates of a revengeful spirit, with as much facility, as did Eve to the seductions of satan; while they despise the commands of God, and neglect the tree of life.

Even if heaven were only equal in blessedness, to the state of man before the fall, it should surely be sufficient to concentrate all our wishes, and to command our best exertions. To possess immortal bodies, to have souls unacquainted with the pangs of guilt, or the perplexities of passion, to enjoy immediate intercourse with our Maker, and to be laid under only one single restraint, in maintaining our allegiance and proving our obedience; it would seem must impart a de-

gree of happiness equal to our most sanguine wishes. And yet, even such a state, falls far below our ideas of heaven. There, it appears, we shall have no restraint, no sickness, no temptation, no labour; but endless songs of praise will resound from immortal tongues.

On the other hand, if in the sorrows and distresses which we now endure, we were denied the hope of a better condition; and at the same time, tortured with the reflection, that all this was the consequence of sin, such a state would seem to be sufficiently agonizing. And still this would afford but a faint conception of the wretchedness of hell. For there, in the absence of every source of enjoyment and consolation, the worm of remorse never dies, and the fire of Jehovah's wrath is never extinguished.

While therefore, we feel the curse of a fallen nature, let us resort to Him who alone can restore us. While we look forward to death, let us remember Him, who gained a complete victory over the grave. When we are alarmed by a review of our sinful lives, let us implore pardon of God, through the merits of our Redeemer. And that we may be enabled no more, to yield to temptation, let us pray for the aid of the holy Spirit, who is yet able to supply strength to our weak and degenerate nature.

EXTRACTS FROM A SERMON ON THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS.

I. Cor. I, 18.—The preaching of the Cross, is to them that perish, foolishness, but unto us, which are saved, it is the power of God.

THE leading point in the preaching of the Apostle, always was, that only by the atonement of our blessed Redeemer, men can be justified from their sins, and secure everlasting peace. And as the sacrifice of the cross, was the consummation of this atonement, "*Christ crucified*," was the highest topick of christian preaching. This he designates in the text, as the *power* of God, and in another place, as the *wisdom* of God. The latter expression, he no doubt, adopted in opposition to the wisdom of man. The wisdom of man, included no correct knowledge of God. "The world by wisdom knew not God:" they retained some kind of

indistinct traditionary notion of a Deity, but so confused, and so unsatisfactory was this, that they fell into the most absurd kinds of idolatry. Indeed, the natural, or the animal-man,—man in that state, in which every one would remain without a religion from God, possessing no light from revelation, and under the dominion of all the evil propensities and bad passions of an unconverted heart, could never attain any certain knowledge of God or of his wisdom.

Religion, necessarily implies a communication from God. And although, when this religion is fully understood, it is found exactly suited to the nature and condition of man, still it is such as the wisdom of man could never have devised,—a scheme far above his conception and his power. It is the production of that mind, which alone truly perceives what man wants to make him holy, and to keep him happy. Even with

regard to the body, the intelligence and the art of man, seem inadequate to remedy its maladies and afflictions. And well might the Apostle, looking over the dreary extent of our spiritual wants, exclaim, "where is the wise." The sages of antiquity, on the subject of religion, manifested a degree of weakness hardly credible by us, who enjoy the light of revelation. And still such was their vain attachment to their own theories, and their empty imaginations, that to them *Christ crucified* seemed foolishness. Even the Jews, whose religion was a revelation from heaven, and whose prophecies respecting the Messiah, were minute and luminous, rejected our Saviour because he was not as they expected, a temporal, but a spiritual Deliverer. Christ crucified was to them a stumbling block.

Unto us which are saved, who have received this religion as from God, and have

experienced its influence, it is the power of God. The power of God is manifested,—I. In the manner in which the christian religion was developed to the world. II. In the effects produced by it. The first of these propositions we shall pass over in a very cursory manner.

To say nothing of the preparatory dispensation of the Jews,—when our Saviour was about to appear, an angel from heaven gave a clear view of his character and mission in designating his name. Thou shall call his name *Jesus*, for he shall save his people from their sins. John, the Baptist, a prophet, and the forerunner of our Lord, upon seeing Jesus, exclaimed, "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." These intimations were of a nature not to be misunderstood. They clearly set forth that this extraordinary personage was to atone for the sins of the world.

Every subordinate part too of this grand plan, was equally marked with wisdom. Before our Lord commenced his public ministry, he received the attestation of heaven to his character. He commenced his public preaching in exposing the errors of the Jews in religion, which was by that time exceedingly corrupted. And with a wisdom truly divine, he adapted his instructions to the real situation of his hearers with such a degree of exactness, in such a variety of ways, and with such mingled gentleness and force, that he was perceived to speak as never man spoke, and to teach with an authority more than human.

The arrangements which he formed for the reformation of the world, for the extension of his religion, and for the salvation of mankind, all possessed the same character, and were stamped with the wisdom of God. He called the apostles and granted them a

commission to spread and apply this religion: and to enable them to encounter and surmount all difficulties and obstacles, he conferred upon them the various gifts of the Holy Spirit. The whole of this plan was so far removed from the common conceptions and views of man, that well might it be designated "the wisdom of God."

The manner in which the apostles proceeded in this ministry was equally at variance with the wisdom of man. They did not teach a connected system of morality—a theme of philosophy. They uniformly addressed man as a morally diseased being, and they pointed him to the remedy, as a culprit and showed him the access to the mercy seat. While the convictions of cruelty and injustice were fresh in the minds of the Jews for crucifying our Lord, they told them that the same Jesus whom they had crucified, God had exalted to be a Prince and a Sa-

viour; and that there was none other name given under heaven whereby they could be saved. * * * * *

Thus did the first members of the gospel of Christ proceed in converting the world from sin, and in diffusing the light and the comforts of his divine religion. And wherever the cross of Christ was then displayed, wherever this great plan of atonement was unfolded, men resorted to it for pardon and peace. The powerful influence upon the hearts and lives of men, (the second point to be considered,) soon became manifest; and well might the apostle call it the *power of God* to all them that received it.

Not that the apostles stopped here. On this foundation of faith, they told their followers, must be erected, the structure of a holy life. While they relieved their minds by an assurance of pardon through the cross of Christ, they also inculcated a course

of conduct entirely new. They told their followers, that they must be dead unto sin, but alive unto God: they told them that they must deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. They told them, they must forego a conformity to a wicked world; and be transformed, by the renewing of their minds, and exhibit a complete correspondence in their hearts and principles to the religion of Christ. However unwise this plan of preaching, and these doctrines might appear to the conceited philosopher among the Greeks, and the blind bigots among the Jews, it manifested its wisdom and power in effecting a change—a radical change, wherever it was preached. The temples of idolatry sunk into ruins, and the spiritual worship of the true God prevailed. The brutality, the violence, the superstition, the profligacy, which had debased the human race, hid themselves. The face of society

acquired a new aspect. And while individuals applied the cross of Christ to their own salvation, their principles and lives won others to the same faith. Christian temples rose in Rome and in Corinth—in Alexandria and in Carthage. And the worship and the principles of the gospel shed lustre upon the people of these large cities. The small seed, which at first was hardly visible, grew into a great plant; the vine which was planted by the right hand of God, extended till it covered a large portion of the habitable world. And thus the preaching of the cross proved itself to be the power of God.

In the same manner, my brethren, is the religion of Christ to be preached by us, and in the same manner is it to be applied by you. We address you all as sinners—as diseased in a spiritual point of view. And although we trust many have already effectually applied the atonement of Christ, to

these we labor to impart new moral vigor. And on the part of all such, we look for a continually renewed repentance, a minute examination, and a faithful trial of their spiritual condition. Indeed the whole life of a christian implies daily examination—daily repentance—daily acts of faith, and daily aspirations after new supplies of grace. From the enemies of man's salvation, we never escape entirely, till we reach that condition where "the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest." As long as we remain in this world, we are to keep strict guard against its encroachments. However completely we may seem to have subdued our evil propensities, we are never to imagine that nothing more is to be done. However resolutely we may have renounced the devil, still like a roaring lion he goes about seeking whom he may devour. And to those who have attained a high degree of grace, the caution of the apostle may well

be addressed; "Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Besides, in my Father's house, said our blessed Lord, are many mansions. The higher we rise in holiness, the more glorious will be our mansion in heaven. * * * *

To those who are well disposed towards religious obligations, nay even desirous to enjoy its comforts and security, we preach the cross of Christ, as the power of God. We assure them of pardon through faith in their Redeemer. We direct them to the powerful efficacy of all the means of grace to renew their hearts, and to enable them to put on the new man. And all this we do, not upon human but upon divine authority. We do not pronounce it to be a probable, a reasonable thing, that God will pardon a penitent sinner, but declare with authority, that "Christ appeared to save his people from their sins;" that "he gave himself a ransom for all;" and

that "whoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life!" We preach, that the cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation *to all them that believe.* It is not then a precarious, an uncertain advantage that we offer. If the conditions be complied with, the result rests upon the promise of God, who cannot deceive. "Repent, believe, come unto Christ, be renewed in the spirit of your mind," and we assure you of pardon.

Still, this may be only the beginning of a religious course, you must add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity: for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. These are the graces, that spring up

around the tree which was planted for the healing of the nations, from which, as they first derived their seed, so they continue to draw their shelter and their nourishment. The description of persons now in view, we would then admonish to yield up every other consideration, and to embrace the religion of Christ. Good intentions alone, will not avail, they must be carried into effect. A bare desire to be religious, will not answer. If it would not a soul would perish. Religion must effect victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, and qualify the soul for the company of angels and beatified spirits.

To the wicked, to those who are habitually sinners, we offer also, the cross of Christ. Christ declared, that it was the business on which he came, to save sinners, to call lost sheep home, to wash away scarlet sins, to bring all to repentance. And was

not this a merciful errand! The sinner is unquestionably, the most miserable being in existence, pursuing objects that are fleeting and precarious; captivated by pleasures that produce disappointment and remorse; indulging passions, that degrade his nature and involve him in a thousand pains and perplexities; his wounds deep and rankling, and incurable but by that mercy which he scorns. And the influence even of this remedy, extends only to the limits of this life. In another world, there is no means within the vast circle of divine mercy, that can extinguish the fire, or destroy the worm in the guilty conscience. Still the sinner possesses a soul capable of high enjoyments in this life; a soul which is an emanation of Deity, and may be restored to its original connexion with its Maker. And to the sinner, God is daily calling in a variety of ways: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him

turn unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Come unto me, said the Saviour of the world, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." * * * * *

EXTRACTS FROM A SERMON ON CHRISTIAN CHARACTERISTICS.

Eph. III. 14 to 19.—For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

This series of strong expressions, shews what were the sentiments of St. Paul with regard to the nature and the effects of true religion. It was the misfortune of that age, as indeed it has been, in some degree, of every age, to substitute the performance of inconsiderable ceremonies or subordinate duties, for the great virtues and high qualifications of the Child of God. The Jews were scrupulously exact in all smaller reli-

gious observances. But notwithstanding, their violations of the divine law, were of a most flagitious kind; they neglected judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God. They blushed not at the most unprincipled extortion. They indulged a spirit of the most relentless persecution. Under the pretence of zeal, in the cause of God, they cherished the most malignant passions; and in their wrath, they crucified the Lord of glory.

The Gentiles were in a still worse condition. Their understandings were darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their hearts. Perhaps there were few places where idolatry had acquired greater splendour, more boldness, or deeper corruption, than at Ephesus. In this city St. Paul resided for a considerable time, and made many converts to christianity. He appears to have cherished

for them great affection; and while he was a prisoner at Rome, he addressed to them this valuable epistle. But such was his situation, that his prayers and his admonitions were all that he could bestow. "I bow my knees, unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." How impressively does the apostle manifest his sincerity and ardour! Before that Great Being, who is the Father of all on earth and in heaven, I prostrate myself in behalf of my Ephesian converts. Well am I aware of the difficulties they have to encounter. Deeply am I convinced that no human energy can bear them up. I therefore appeal to that God, whose strength is inexhaustible, whose goodness unlimited, to strengthen them with might by "his spirit in the inner man."

The inner man means the spiritual, or the intellectual man. And to be thus strength-

ened implies, the possession of such principles as are not to be corrupted, such motives as are not to be diverted from their aim, such dispositions as partake of a heavenly tone, and such faith as cannot be shaken. This "might in the inner man," is only to be obtained from the Holy Spirit. The apostle does not admonish the Ephesians to fortify themselves against the corruptions of the Jews, and the idolatries of the Gentiles, by reflection, by resolution, by an exertion of their natural powers, but through the influence of God's spirit. And whoever wishes to subdue the power of sin in his heart, to make effectual advances in the divine life, and to prepare for the holy pleasures and privileges of heaven, must pursue a similar course. Sunken in sin as man is by nature, ruined, lost, the complete re-establishment of holiness in his heart is not to be effected but by supernatural means. Nothing less can implant new principles, introduce new

habits, communicate a new character. By Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, is implied the full possession of the heart by faith; Christ adopted in all his holy offices, his sublime perfections, and his divine principles. This is a great attainment. Pardon of sin through the all sufficient atonement of a Redeemer, is a blessing, a mercy, unutterable. But when to this is added a rescue from the tyranny of sin, this completes the stupendous benefit. And every view of our spiritual condition presents us with the countenance of an appeased God, through the blood of our glorious Redeemer. * * * * * *

And still, this religion does not stop here. When Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, he not only pardons sin, and destroys its power, but through the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, he becomes the source and the spring of all goodness. He gives spiritual life to

the new man. To the understanding, religion communicates the knowledge of salvation; the will, it brings into obedience to the gospel of Christ; and the affections it raises to things above.

It has been thought to be one of the highest efforts of imagination to form the model of a perfect man. The christian has this work accomplished for him. The character of Jesus Christ is the portrait, not of an angel, but of a man uniformly guided and controlled by the gospel. And the believer who has so fully studied his life as to have transferred hir moral image into his heart, to him Christ becomes the blessed source, and the bright model, of christian perfection. His humble deportment, his patient spirit, his persuasive appeals, his dignified simplicity, his inexhaustible tenderness, his awful but just severity, his immaculate morality,—his whole admirable character, so pure, so benignant

and sublime, presents an image, which we have only devoutly to contemplate, to be filled with the love and admiration of virtue.

This, however, is a matter not to be attained at once. To become like God in his communicable attributes is the fruit of no ordinary exertion. Diligent examination; resolute self-denial; great tenderness of conscience; the most unaffected distrust of our own strength; the most unqualified reliance upon divine grace, invigorated by continual prayer; a growing love for God and godliness; a deep conviction of divine and eternal things:—these are among the elements of that matured holiness, which constitutes the image of Christ formed in our hearts by faith.

It must indeed be admitted, that the course is arduous, frequently painful in the outset, in the progress requiring decision and ener-

gy, to surmount temptations; patience to endure hardships; humility to repent and forsake any error, or retrace any wanderings; and an eye steadfastly fixed upon the glorious prize of our high calling. These things would be hard to human strength. But it is our consolation, that we are called to run, not in our own strength; that power will be given us from on high; that our assistance will be abundantly proportioned to our difficulties; that we shall wax stronger and stronger; that attainments which seemed at first impracticable, will become easy and delightful. But, above all, let us remember, that the prize is an unfading imperishable crown of glory, a crown whose wreaths are woven in this present life to receive new lustre in the life to come; a reward which we begin to reap during our earthly course; for it is undeniable and can be attested by the experience of all good men, that wherever religion has attained its

full influence it proves that it is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. The sinner is tormented with misgivings and fears; in every view that he takes of the goodness of God, of the purity of his nature, of the holiness of his law, he sees himself a vile condemned being; and when he considers the astonishing means that have been used for his salvation, and recollects, that these means he has spurned or abused, he cannot enjoy hope or comfort. When he sees his fellow creatures daily passing into the grave, he must acknowledge his liability to be ushered into that state, where is no repentance. Whence then can substantial peace and enjoyment arise to him? He possesses not a single ingredient of happiness. Whereas he, who is rooted and grounded in love, he who views with grateful admiration, "the love of Christ in its

length, its breadth, its depth, and its height, becomes filled with all the fullness of God."

This strong expression is highly characteristic of the ardent and zealous spirit of the apostle. It implies the highest grade of christian attainments, faith in full operation. Let it never be supposed that the christian standard, in all its pure and lofty excellence, is what human beings cannot attain.—That they cannot by any inherent virtue or strength, we readily admit. But, far gone as we are from original righteousness, let a man sincerely, ardently and perseveringly apply the means of grace; let him every morning and evening, bow his knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying to be strengthened by his spirit in the inner man; let him perform all his active as well as devotional duties in the fear of God; let him study the whole system of the gospel, till Christ be formed in his heart by faith; let him

devote the Lord's day exclusively to public and private worship; let him renew his covenant in the Sacrament with frequency, fervor, self-examination, and humble faith in the promises; and he will surely grow in grace, until he has attained the measure of the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. It is a mere shadow of christianity at which some grasp. A comfortless, an ineffectual faith that they possess. And how can it be otherwise? Let any discriminating, judicious man, institute an inquiry into the means used to attain a finished worldly character, and that of a true christian. With regard to the former, no occasions are overlooked, no means omitted, no expense withheld, no painful vigilance spared in moulding the outlines, and adorning the traits of the fashionable character. Many months and years, and the most ample instruction, are devoted to form complete professional characters. And indeed in every department of life, hard la-

bour, severe application, long exercise are applied to insure success. And are we to expect to reach the perfection of the christian character without care, without vigilance and self-denial, without the devout and persevering application of means of grace? Need it be wondered at that persons, who spend every hour of the day in worldly business, the whole evening in dissipation or repose, and the Lord's day, with the exception of an hour or two, in visiting, or in idle conversation, make no advances in a holy life? The only wonder is, that such persons do not sink lower in the scale of depravity, than they really do. They are restrained by interest, by society, but not by grace. And surely my brethren it is an awful thing, in a world in which we have daily experience of the uncertainty of life, and of the rapid approach of eternity, to trifle with our spiritual and immortal interests.

Let me beseech you, by all that is dear in life and valuable in eternity, to examine carefully whether Christ dwells in your hearts by faith; whether you have fixed his pure and exalted character as the model by which you are correcting and heightening your own; whether you are labouring to bring every thought into captivity to his obedience; whether love, love to God your Saviour, love to your fellow man, be the commanding affection of your hearts; and also whether the faculties of your souls be daily expanding under the power of the gospel, so as to become more and more filled with all the fullness of God. * * * * * * *

It is a consideration that will of itself prove a source of the most severe torment, to have passed through this probationary state, for no better purpose than to be consigned to hell. If we have acquired riches,

we must leave them behind us at death. If we have treasured up stores of worldly wisdom, they are worthless in comparison to the knowledge of God and salvation. If we have acquired fame or rank in any of the departments of human life, this passes away like a blast of wind. If we have attained the very pinnacle of distinction among the frivolous, whose idols are dress and amusement, the fashion of this world passeth away. If we have raised families, it must in a great degree depend on the manner in which we have educated and instructed them, on the example we have set before them, and on the prayers we have presented to the throne of mercy in their behalf, whether they shall be glorified spirits in God's kingdom, or tormented fiends in the regions of darkness. This surely is a most agonizing thought. Remember that our offspring, on account of our negligence or our wickedness, may add to the number of the despairing inhabitants

of the kingdom of Satan. Who can be unmoved by this thought?

While it is admitted, that to attain the standard of the christian life, is an arduous task, it is also true, that the christian has his sorrows as well as his trials. But his sorrow in the end, is better than this world's joy. Every trial, every affliction, draws him near to his God. In the secrecy of his chamber, in the silence of midnight, he has a resource which the world knows not of; he pours forth his fears and griefs, into the bosom of his Maker. Suffering thus becomes a well-spring of delight, for it is found to be a source of spiritual exaltation. Thus it is, that all things work together, not only for good, but eventually for enjoyment, to them that love God. Thus it is, that if they sow in tears, they reap in joy.

My brethren, your own hearts testify, I humbly trust, that this is not a picture of the imagination, but that it is the work of Christ formed in the heart by faith. Such sentiments will be familiar to you, if, with hearts set upon the attainment of heavenly wisdom and love, you trace the feelings of the early christians, as they are exhibited in the new Testament: above all, if you make the discourses of our Lord, and the writings of his followers, the spiritual food of your souls, you will then, practically ascertain, that there is a depth, a fulness, an all-pervading energy, in the Love of God, which affords the purest, the most inexhaustible enjoyment. You will then cordially participate in those feelings of the Apostles, which are unintelligible to the world. They were enabled to exclaim, "we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; as dying, and behold we live; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as having nothing, yet possessing all things."

The secret workings of your own hearts, your experience of that gracious and endearing process, by which God brings home the troubled spirit to himself, will then be to you, the best comment on that wonderful passage of the Apostle: "we glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

If this is but the completion of the christian character, to attain this glorious condition, call upon your God and he will hear you. Seek, and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you. The rich,—those who trust in riches for happiness,—the proud, whose idol is the world, God will send empty away. But it is to the poor in spirit, to them who mourn for their past of-

fences, to them who labour under a sense of present infirmity, to them who hunger and thirst after righteousness, that comfort, and rest, and fulness of joy are promised. If then with sincerity and earnestness of heart, you come to your Redeemer, he will in no wise cast you out. * * * *

EXTRACTS OF A SERMON ON THE HAPPY INFLUENCE OF A BENEVOLENT SPIRIT.

Prov. xv. 17.—Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith.

CHRISTIANITY is not more remarkable in any one respect than it is for the salutary influence it has shed over domestic life. Still

in this particular, as well as in many others, much remains to be done. Although ours is a christian country, we are far below the christian standard. The corrupt propensities of human nature retain an undue ascendancy. The malignant influence of Satan has not entirely yielded to the influence of Christ. The triumph of the cross is not yet complete, nor are all the traces of sin effaced. To effect this great object, however, is the business of the ministry, and to attain it ought to be the aim of every christian. For in addition to its boon of endless happiness in heaven, the uniform influence of the gospel, would in many respects, convert this world into a most happy and lovely scene.

What is here designated, "a dinner of herbs" was, in the estimation of the Jews the most meagre and indifferent fare,—while that of an ox, or a fatted calf, represented their most luxurious entertainment. Hence

when a king is represented as having made a marriage supper for his son, oxen and fatlings are especially mentioned. When the father was about to shew his delight at the return of his prodigal son, he ordered the fatted calf to be killed.

The force of the contrast will not however fully appear unless we raise our ideas of love to the christian standard. The view of Solomon cannot be supposed to have reached as far as that of Jesus Christ. For in all things, He traced every principle and every affection up to the highest source, the connexion of man with God. Consequently the love of God is in the christian's view, the source from which springs the love of man in its pure state. And this love of God is a heavenly affection, spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. Viewing God as the author of all things—the source of all goodness—the fountain of all mercy, the

christian extends this sentiment so as to embrace all his works, but man especially, the whole family of rational beings. And when this principle is brought to act upon domestic life, its influence is great and delightful. In a small community, and more especially in a family, we have a near view of each other's follies, infirmities, evil propensities, and defects. We also discover and feel there distinctly the influence of every virtue that may exist. While love soothes and appeases the former, she cherishes and heightens the latter. Not confining her influence to the body, over which, however, she exercises a most tender and affectionate care, not limiting her operations to temporal wants or temporal difficulties, her highest scope of action is with the soul. To lead it to the source of mercy, to direct it to the blood of sprinkling, to cherish in it heavenly affection, and to advance its everlasting welfare,—this is the lofty aim of true love.

And whenever such a heavenly being has taken up her residence in a family, she renders all things calm and peaceful. However difficult the condition—however mean the fare—however severe the destiny, love will diffuse through the family a heavenly temper. Enter the cottage of a poor man, and if love be enthroned in the hearts of the family, you will see cheerfulness and contentment. Enter the palace of the rich, and to polished manners, love, you will find, adds a degree of serenity and refinement, which nothing else can impart. But on the other hand, whenever malice commences her destructive work in a family, sullenness, petulance, unkind looks, and harsh answers, destroy all its enjoyment. And it matters not how easy, or how affluent the condition of such may be, this is an evil that nothing can counterbalance.

Even when this ill will does not break out in actual strife, if it destroy all affectionate and confidential intercourse, and produce indifference and coldness of deportment, it will mar the comfort of the social state. For the highest gratifications of a domestic circle, consist in an easy and unreserved interchange of sentiments, in a kind and affectionate attention to all the little wants, and even caprices of one another, but more especially to the promotion of the moral excellence and everlasting welfare of every member of the little society. Indeed a family in which malice exists, in which all the evil passions of unsubdued hearts domineer, must afford a just emblem of the final condition of sinners assembled beyond the grave.

But while the text contains a position which few will deny, and which too many realise, still the true remedy is not always discovered. Personal beauty and accom-

plishments may secure a species of affection for a time. The usages of civilized society may so far operate as to produce tranquillity and apparent kindness. But the true ground of a happy intercourse must be laid deeply in the heart. And this cannot be effected but by religion. Erected upon any other foundation, the love of a family will be variable and incomplete; regulated by circumstances, and changing with times and situations. *

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The natural condition of the human heart, is such, that the briers and thorns of sin,—violent passions, vexatious tempers, inordinate propensities—prevail. And these exercise a most unpropitious influence over domestic life. They tyrannize when there is nothing to control them. They rage when there is none to cause them to blush for their violence. And upon the helpless and unprotected, they vent their unwearied ma-

lignity. In almost every family, where the influence of christianity has never been felt, there are the most insupportable vexations and distress. And there is no effectual way to remedy this, but by cultivating christian principles, and applying consecrated means.

The very first principle of religion, operates in a most powerful way upon the heart of man. To reflect, that we are constantly under the eye of that Being, with whom the darkness is no darkness at all, carries its influence through all the varieties of domestic life. And when to this it is added, that this Being is represented in scripture, as possessing a character so essentially amiable and good, that he is called *love itself*, to acquire some similarity to him, must surely be the highest aim of every human being. Let the head of a family, view his little community as (under God's providential care,) depending upon him in a great measure for their com-

fort, for their daily bread, and for that tenderness and affection which sweeten life. If love reign in his heart, preserving some faint resemblance to his heavenly Father, he will be impartially and actively good unto all; and his highest aim will be to promote their everlasting welfare. By necessary restraints and prudent indulgences, he will make his little society like a happy world, under the kind influence of its heavenly Protector. And his goodness, and the wisdom of his conduct, will be equally apparent, when he restrains as when he indulges;—when he corrects as when he rewards.

* * * *

Moreover, love is one of the fruits of the Spirit. "If this heavenly guest has taken up his abode and residence in a family, love will pervade all its intercourse. And it is in vain to pretend to be christians, unless this be the case. To profess to have risen

from the death of sin, to a life of righteousness; to have put on the new man; to be renewed in the spirit of our mind; to be converted from a state of nature to a state of grace, and still to retain the very worst symptoms of a depraved heart,—this is all vain and hypocritical. And, while we have many tests of a state of preparation for heaven, often exhibited and insisted upon, none can be more sure, than where the soul is so cleared from all selfish dispositions, all passionate tempers, as to exhibit the triumphant influence of love. This is a convincing proof, that the principles of religion are sound and practical, because its holy influence has given a heavenly temper to the soul.

I beg you therefore, my brethren, carefully to examine yourselves in this matter. You must be careful not to mistake a little facility of temper, or softness of disposition,

for genuine christian love. This is an active, energetic virtue. It bears trials. It takes in all the deportment, and delights to act in difficult circumstances. While it studies to render the temporal situation comfortable, it also seeks the everlasting happiness of its object. For what is it but love to the souls of men, imitating, and kindled by the goodness of God, that has originated, and still induces men to carry on those immense schemes which the world has seen with astonishment, in disseminating the Gospel of Christ! What is it but love that superintends and animates all those various associations formed to promote human happiness and to secure salvation? How can there be true love to God or man, when professing christians refuse their co-operation in these things!

But you are not to imagine that this christian grace is to be attained and cultiva-

ted in any other way than by those gracious means which christianity has established to prepare us for heaven. While this is the distinguishing mark of the true followers of our Lord, and one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, it is not to be attained without prayer. In a family in which the worship of God is daily practised, we shall hardly fail to find love and happiness. When the little community unite in prayer for each other, the influence of that spirit which we are taught, is mighty in operation, will infuse into their souls a divine temper. Private devotions too, will be highly effectual in cultivating this virtue. Private prayer more closely adapts itself to our infirmities and vices. It partakes largely of meditation, and indeed may be practised in any situation, or while engaged in any employment. Let a person reflect that by venting the ebullitions of an evil temper, by indulging any turbulent propensity, he may, in occasioning too severe trials,

endanger the spiritual safety, as well as destroy the comfort, of a whole family; and let him close such a reflection with an aspiration for divine aid to imitate the patience and meekness of Christ, and he may be assured that perseverance in such prayer, will end in a complete triumph.

The reading of the Scriptures too will have a most happy influence upon the peace of a family. Besides its exhibition of the example of Christ, a spirit pervades that Holy Book which belongs to no other; and it is hardly possible to peruse it often without imbibing this spirit.

And moreover, the christian church is a community formed for the express purpose of training human beings for heaven—and of this community the distinguishing characteristic is love. To cultivate this virtue, all her services, all her ordinances, all her disci-

pline, are calculated and applied. The sacrament of the Lord's supper is the highest act of communion with the Divine head of the Church, and with all its members. And none are deemed worthy to partake of this spiritual feast, but they whose hearts are filled with love. At the table of the Lord, there must not be an unkind feeling, a discordant passion, or vindictive impulse. They who are capable of these, are only qualified to go into outer darkness. They have no part or lot in christian privileges. And if they continue in this state of mind until death seize them, they will be for ever abandoned to the society of wicked and condemned spirits. * * * *

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EXTRACTS OF A SERMON ON THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

PREACHED AT THE FUNERAL, AND IN THE PARISH OF THE RT. REV. BISHOP CLAGETT.

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2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8 —I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also, that love his appearing.

THERE is a strong desire common to men to know the sentiments and the resources of others, when they are about to depart into the world of spirits; while a variety of circumstances tend to conceal one's real spiritual character in this awful situation. Sometimes the delirium of fever, and the agony of disease, so affect the organs by which the mind performs its functions, that little can be discovered of its moral condition. Even

in cases where life is to be cut off by violence, and at a fixed time, there is often such an anxiety to maintain a character of undaunted firmness, that the mind is wrought up to a kind of artificial energy, or sunk in apathy.

In St. Paul, every circumstance united to cause him, in the prospect of death, to utter his real sentiments and discover the grounds of his support. He possessed a firm and resolute mind, and was not to be effected by the raptures of a disturbed imagination. All the awful process of judgment, the regions of bliss, and the abode of misery, had long been familiar to his thoughts. The unrelenting hand of persecution, he perceived would soon seize upon him, and in this situation he uttered the sentiment in the text. It was an allusion to the Grecian games, in which the victorious were crowned with laurel; and the ardor manifested by the com-

batants in their strife, was truly emblematical of his zeal in the christian cause. "I have maintained the cause of Christ in opposition to the prejudices of the Jews, the philosophy of the Greeks, and the power of the Romans. I have carried the triumphant cross of Christ into distant regions of the earth. I have preserved the doctrines of the gospel from the corruptions of idolatry, and the perversions of men. Moreover, I have maintained a vigorous warfare against all the enemies of my own soul. I have resisted the seduction of the world, and the wiles of the devil; and trusting to the promises of my God, and the righteousness of my Saviour—my hope is fixed on the rock of ages.

As nothing is more desirable than a spiritual condition, which will enable us like St. Paul to meet death with well grounded hope and confidence, it is important to understand

the nature of this *conflict;* the means by which it is to be maintained; and the *result* of victory. These will form the topics of this discourse.

This conflict is not peculiar to any particular condition in life. It is not against poverty, but against discontent. It is not against riches, but against pride. It is not against industry, but against worldly mindedness. It is not against power, but against oppression. The case is exactly similar with regard to the world. It is not against the comforts of social life that we have to contend, but against the contagion of evil example. It is not against the moderate enjoyment of all the bounties of providence, but against their abuse to intemperance and prodigality. The maxims, and the fashions of the world, we are so far to resist, as they are at variance with the principles of religion, as they tend to corrupt our hearts, or

vitiate our principles. It was one of the grounds of consolation with St. Paul, on a retrospect of his life, that he had kept the faith. This in its most obvious sense implies, that he, as a minister of Christ, had preserved the doctrines of christianity pure and unimpaired: but it may also mean, that as an individual, he had formed his principles and regulated his life by these doctrines: and that they had produced their full effect upon his heart and his conduct.

But in the christian conflict, we have an unseen enemy to fight against. The devil as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour,—suggesting wicked designs, inflaming bad dispositions, and thus carrying on his work of destruction among the souls of men. His machinations too have been put in motion against the church of Christ, producing divisions among christians, and fomenting corruptions in the faith.

II. By what means then, are all these enemies to be conquered? How is this important victory to be secured?

St. Paul had been a vehement opposer of Christ. He had much to be forgiven, yet he obtained mercy. He secured pardon through the blood of his Redeemer. And the Holy Spirit, the ordinances of the church, the hope of an eternal reward, the fear of endless perdition, the assurance of righteous judgment,—invigorated his spiritual strength, and enabled him to overcome. In like manner every christian, who comes to God with a penitent heart, every believer in Christ, who pleads the merits of his death, shall obtain pardon. And his humble and sincere devotion, invokes grace to protect him from the power of temptation. Have you disregarded your Saviour and opposed his religion? Yield yourselves up to his dominion, and a broken and contrite heart he

will never reject. Have you indulged all the evil propensities of a sinful nature?—Cast yourselves before his holy altar, and he will bestow strength to enable you to vanquish them. Let your prayers ascend to the throne of grace, with regularity and fervor. Devote your whole sabbaths to the service of God. Watch the emotions of your heart. Join in all the schemes of pious benevolence, which bless the agent as well as the special object. And then you will gradually rise above the corruptions of an evil world, and rejoice in all the privileges of the redeeming covenant.

But this victory is only to be obtained by ardor and perseverance. The warrior generally succeeds not, until after many conflicts. Losses are to be recovered, errors repaired, and advantages improved. In this way only, will our victory be sure, and our triumph glorious.

III. And what will be the result? Not the wealth of this world, but the riches of grace; not temporal honor, but an eternal kingdom; not a wreath of laurel, but a crown of glory. The man who has only vanquished armies in the field of battle, is a conqueror, far less honorable, than the man who has subdued his own heart. The man who has led subjected kings and emperors in triumph, or has merely achieved the deliverance of nations, may be less exalted, than he who has triumphed over evil appetites and habits, and become the free man of Christ Jesus.

The fruits of the christian's victory, are, peace of mind, and godly dispositions. There are no jarring elements, no contending interests in his breast. He looks up to God, as a kind and merciful Father. He views Jesus as a mighty Redeemer, and his soul is daily brightening with the divine resemblance. With the most humble, but holy

hope, he can look back upon his past life, and say, I have fought a good fight.

But what shall we say to those, who have not yet engaged in this warfare, who have never yet enlisted under the banner of Christ, nor used any effort to subdue the power of sin? Can we flatter *them* with hope of a crown of glory? This would be the greatest unkindness. What a warfare have they yet to accomplish! To subdue sins long practised, to break habits long indulged, to conquer dispositions overbearing and stubborn, to acquire graces vigorous and exalted, is a work not to be effected without much labor and care, and without the utmost aid of divine mercy; a work, for which the efforts of a sick bed are too feeble, dying exertions too languid. It is the business of a whole life. * * * * *

You have, no doubt, all along perceived the reference of my discourse to the occasion which has called us together this day. Death is indeed, under all circumstances, calculated to awaken deep sensibility. To follow our fellow-creatures to the grave,—the termination of their earthly career, the entrance upon their unchangeable and eternal condition, is always affecting. But there are circumstamces, that add to this occasion, an unusual degree of interest and sympathy. A man of God, a veteran ambassador in the Redeemer's cause, *the first prelate consecrated in this country to the apostolick office*, has yielded up his commission to his Master, and now demands our parting offices of love. He has fought a *good fight;* he has finished his course; he has kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give him at that day.

At all times, and in the most favourable state of things, the ministers of the gospel have to maintain an arduous fight, against the corruptions of the world, the enemies of the church of Christ, and the influence of sin. But our venerable father fell upon times of no ordinary difficulty. At the American revolution, when all things both in church and state, were to be new modelled, to preserve the divine order of the church untouched by a spirit of innovation; to maintain her simple and scriptural ordinances; to guard her Liturgy from the rash hand of self-conceit, ignorance and fanaticism; to exhibit her truly evangelical doctrines, during a period favorable to every kind of delusion;—all this demanded a severe and protracted conflict, in which he had to bear a conspicuous part. And throughout the whole, no man could have maintained a more uniformly correct line of conduct.

Bishop Claggett was a true and genuine son of the church. Her ministers he viewed as ambassadors for Christ, and as stewards of the mysteries of God. Her sacraments he considered as channels, by which all the benefits of the covenant of Christ, and all the consolations of the Holy Spirit, are conveyed to the believing soul. Her Liturgy he deemed the most perfect formula of devotion in the christian world, constructed on the models of primitive worship, filled with principles of gospel doctrine, and calculated to elevate the affections, and to chasten the imagination. Her Articles he believed to contain all the prominent points of christian faith. And although enlarged and liberal in his views, he was firm, and consistent, and honest in his maintenance of her distinctive principles and character.

As a preacher, he stood in the foremost rank. His manner was commanding and

impressive; his sermons copious and replete with scriptural matter. To the imagination of the sinner, he opened the regions of eternal penalties. To the penitent, he displayed all the benefits of atonement, and all the riches of grace. To the striving christian, he offered the encouragement of divine aid, and the glorious rewards of heaven. The wounds and the maladies of the unconverted heart of man, called forth his tenderest solicitude, and like a skilful physician, he applied the only effectual remedy, the blood of Christ.

As a divine, his learning was of the most valuable kind. Having enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education, and possessing the precious talent of a most retentive memory, his knowledge of church history was unusually correct. The best divines of the church he had carefully studied. And with the fund of knowledge thus treasured

up, he was ready for all the exigencies of his station.

As a Bishop, he maintained the divine institution of the ministry against all attacks; he was sensible of the just privileges of his office, and anxious to preserve its high standing in the christian world. To his clergy he was affectionate and friendly; and generally received from them strong marks of respect and esteem.

Of the estimation in which he was held as the pastor of a parish, you are able to exhibit the best proofs. Many doubtless are ready to say "to him I am indebted for the first religious impressions made on my mind." Or perhaps "he was an instrument in the hands of God in checking us in the career of folly and iniquity. He led us to a Saviour; he administered the bread of life to our souls; when affliction had borne us

down, he uttered words that imparted to us consolation and peace."

As to his private character, in the midst of his dearest connexions, who experienced his tenderness, and felt his worth; in the midst of his neighbours and friends, who have long known and no doubt gratefully appreciated his virtues, it would be in vain for me to attempt to portray it. He has gone to that state in which the praise of man cannot profit or console. And although we may indulge our affections in dwelling on his memory, the use to be made of all such dispensations, is to impress our minds with a direct sense of the uncertainty of our own days, of the value of religion, and of the necessity of being always ready for the hour of death. In a little time, our eyes too will close upon this world and all its arrangements. And you who have often listened to his instructions, will have to render an account of the im-

provement made of them. His calls to repentance, his offers of mercy through a Redeemer, his tender and affecting admonitions to holiness, will never again be repeated in your ears: but at the great day of the Lord, when we shall all stand at the bar of a righteous judgment, it will then appear what grace and strength we have derived from all the advantages we have enjoyed. If the seeds of piety which he planted in your hearts be duly cultivated, if the example which he set be carefully copied, you will appear with unspeakable joy on that decisive day. But on the other hand, should it appear against you at so awful a trial, that he called you to repentance in vain; that the riches of grace which he displayed, you rejected; that though he proclaimed pardon, through an atoneing Redeemer, to every sincere penitent, you remained hardened in sin; that he opened to your faith the regions of futurity; but you remained unmoved,—alas,

what remedy would your condition then admit? Let these things sink deep into your hearts. And may the Holy Spirit apply them in such a manner, that we may all devoutly prepare for death and judgment.

But my brethren, though he is gone from you, let him still live in your hearts. Improve the principles that he inculcated; cherish the flame of piety that he kindled; maintain the church into which many of you were initiated by him; follow your Saviour to whom he introduced you; and lay hold of those glorious rewards that he displayed to your view. This will be to his memory the most honorable tribute of respect that you can possibly pay.

PASSAGES OF A SERMON ON PREPARATION FOR JUDGMENT, PREFIXED TO

EXTRACTS FROM THE LAST SERMON WHICH THE BISHOP DELIVERED.

II. Corinth. v. 10.—For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

The resurrection of the dead, the last and awful judgment, the eternal condition of the righteous and the wicked, are topics of deeper interest, than any other that can be presented to the consideration of mankind. They form the ground of our hopes and fears, our principles and conduct. They greatly affect both our present and future happiness. But as they are, strictly speaking, points of *revealed religion*, we are by no means to suffer our minds, in the con-

templation of them, to pass over its limits into the regions of fanciful speculation.

Let us endeavour to realize such circumstances as the gospel discloses. Let us only suppose the inhabitants of a single city changed in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump. Let us only imagine the dead of a single cemetery rising from the sleep of ages. Let us contemplate the Judge descending in all the majesty of heaven, and the dreadful separation taking place; and let us view the righteous entering upon the bliss of heaven, and the wicked descending into their fearful destiny. Would not this view constrain us to make God and conscience our friends—to secure the approbation of the judge,—and to become qualified for an enjoyment of the promises. * *

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Those who, instead of purifying their hearts, controlling their passions, and culti-

vating true godliness, are continually expecting visionary attestations of divine favor, will find they have been pursuing a shadow, and neglecting the substance. Those too, who imagine that they can secure happiness by any other means than those prescribed in the bible,—faith, repentance, and true-piety; or that these are to be acquired and cherished in any other way than by the institutions of God; that the word of God, by which our lives should be formed, and by which we must stand acquitted or condemned at the day of judgment, may be slighted for personal revelations, which we have no ground for expecting; that the sacraments and other means of grace ordained by Christ, are to be displaced by the inventions of men; that they who cherish frenzied agitations for the divine impulses of the Holy Spirit, which only operates, by inspiring holy purposes, by cleansing the thoughts and strengthening the love of God and of man,—they

who resign themselves to these dangerous delusions, prepare for themselves insupportable consternation in the last great day.

With many the fault is, in their adopting a kind of religion, which is a mixture of their own notions and of the rules of scripture. And with such, the precepts of the gospel are explained away to suit their own vain practice. The maxims of the world take place of the rules of Christ. His invitations are deemed needless or impracticable, or some sort of apology is made for their neglect. Such have no solid ground for hope; no foundation that will continue unmoved, when the rains descend and the winds blow, and beat upon the fabric of their faith.

And surely it is an awful thing to die without such a knowledge of God and of Christ, as we not only require for our true peace in life, but as will sustain us, when

every thing else shall fail. In life, even if we have no substantial consolations from religion, there are many things either to exhilarate the spirits, or absorb the attention. But when death comes, all these vanish for ever. There is then no more gaiety to distract the thoughts, no companions to support the spirits. There is no change of scenes, nor any diversity of engagements. All temporal possessions remain behind, all earthly acquisitions sink into nothingness. And it is a God reconciled through Jesus Christ; it is a soul sanctified by the Holy Spirit; it is an humble reliance upon mercy, through the covenant, that can yield any consolation or support at this fearful hour. Promises of future amendment will not then answer, for life is at an end. Much time has already been granted, but the sinner has foolishly squandered it. The awful crisis is come for which no admonitions could induce him to prepare—to which no warnings

could make him look forward. And must this sad conflict be endured, without hope and without a promise? Gracious God, unsupported by thee, who can tread the paths of death without the most insupportable horror and dismay!

What renders the conscience of the sinner here more tolerable is, that he proposes, at some time, to repent and turn to God. He promises to relinquish his folly, after the gaiety of his spirits is exhausted. He promises to bestow serious attention upon religion, after certain plans are accomplished, or a certain age attained. Often are these promises repeated, but as often are they forgotten. God in his tender mercy, and by various means, is calling him to repentance. Sometimes he is brought to form resolutions of a new life, by the preaching of the gospel. Sometimes he is arrested in his career by sickness, or the loss of friends. Of these

moments of seriousness the Holy Spirit avails himself, to strengthen purposes of a new life, and bring to maturity every holy determination. But as soon as temptation again besets him, he rushes into sin with redoubled ardor—till at last the messenger of death arrives, and he closes the scene in sad lamentation, or outrageous despair; but more commonly in a morbid stupidity, and judicial blindness.

I, this day, my brethren, as an humble minister of our blessed Saviour, and as an instrument in the hands of a long suffering, merciful God, call upon you seriously to inquire, whether you are living in such a state, as, if death were now to arrive, would deny you the benefits of the saving covenant. Examine I beseech you whether you are duly instructed in the plan of salvation;—whether you are faithfully conformed to its terms. For, forget not, that it is

upon the terms of God and not of man, that you must be judged and saved. And oh, be assured that it is a blessed, glorious privilege to have secured Christ's great salvation. The man who has attained this state, stands upon a foundation that cannot be shaken. Through prosperity and adversity, through life and through death, he remains unmoved;—having secured the favour and support of him, in whose hands are all things, with whom the happiness of the christian will ever be secure, through all the changes of time, in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment.

And are you, my brethren, contented to encounter death in your present state? Have you nothing to repent? Have you nothing to cherish or amend? Have you nothing to learn from the source of all truth? Have you no doubts about your acquittal at the day of judgment? If you have, there is

no time to be lost; there is no time to tempt the forbearance of God, or to trifle with the extent of mercy. Has your past time been spent in folly. What remains ought surely then to pass in the cultivation of wisdom. Have you neither lived, nor prayed, nor believed, as immortal beings? Poor idolaters of time, and sense, and vanity, for which purpose did God make you? You may have accumulated riches; you may have acquired fame; you may have possessed an infatuating, momentary prosperity. But when you now look back on your enjoyment, examine your acquisitions, calculate the value of your lives,—what is the great amount? Where are the pleasures of other years, where are the acquirements gained in the haunts of sin? They are gone,—they are gone,—and their remembrance excites only a painful sigh.

But piety shall never fail; purity of heart shall never be appalled; a trust in God shall never be shaken: faith in a Saviour will perpetually be growing stronger; a holy life will afford a peaceful retrospection. And when all other things elude the grasp of the departing soul, these will yield substantial consolation. That these, my brethren, may be your comfort in the day of adversity, and at the hour of death, may God grant, through Jesus Christ.

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